THE

POETICAL WORKS

OF

PHILIP LEWIS

COMEDIAN,

FORMERLY OF

COVENT-GARDEN THEATRE.

At ſeventeen years many their fortune's ſeek,
But at fourſcore it is too late a week,

SHAKESPEARE.

PUBLISHED FOR THE BENEFIT OF THE AUTHOR.

To be had of Him, and the following BOOKSELLERS: Mr. HOLLAND, No. 50, Oxford-ſtreet; Mr. STALKER, Stationer's-court, Ludgate-ſtreet; Mr. DEBRETT, Piccadilly; Mr. BURROWES, Haymarket; and of Mr. JONES, Circulating Library, Weſtminſter Bridge.

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DEDICATION.

To MISS MACKWORTH.

MADAM,

PROMPTED by the dictates of the purest gratitude, I humbly request your acceptance of the following Poetical effusions.

Honoured as I have been, by the notice and regard of your most respectable Family; and flattered by the attentions which your native benevolence, have ever distinguished me with; I feel myself wholly incompetent to any adequate return, and am, therefore, to ardently entreat, that what I now inscribe to you, may meet your approbation. Lady Mack-

worth, your moſt excellent mother, has exerted herſelf in contributing to the ſupport of an indigent old Man, and your Patronage at this time will be a double bleſſing. I am,

MADAM,

With the moſt unfeigned reſpect,

Your moſt obliged,

and very grateful ſervant,

PHILIP LEWIS.

TO THE

PUBLIC.

IN every attempt of this nature, it is an abſolute duty, every way incumbent on the Author to ſubmit his inducements to the notice of a generous, and a diſcerning public.

Impreſſed with that idea, and exulting in a grateful remembrance of long and continued favours, the Author again appears before his beſt Friends; and however depreſſed by the attendant infirmities of age, and worn by malady, or misfortune, he ſtill truſts to experience that candor and liberality as a Writer, which he has, in a period of many years, uniformly been honored with as an Actor.

Once ſituated at the Theatre-Royal, Covent-Garden, where he fondly imagined to have

found an home, he there was taught the mutability ever attendant on the ſons of men, and more eſpecially thoſe who ſeek their only ſupport from Theatrical exertions. Diſcharged from that Stage, the remembrance of which he ſhall ever cheriſh with the moſt lively feelings, for there he ever met with a warmth of reception and a liberality of encouragement, that ever mark the character of a London audience, and prove them in the fulleſt, and moſt unequivocal manner, the friends of modeſt merit, and the foſterers of genius. Since that diſcharge, without any claim upon the fund, the Author has viſited various parts of the kingdom in his Theatrical capacity; and has invariably been favoured with approbation and applauſe. Yet it was left to his old age to meet the moſt diſtinguiſhed honour, and at Cheltenham, in 1788, when that place was favoured by a royal viſit, where, in different characters, he had the good fortune to pleaſe, and to receive public demonſtrations of that pleaſure from Majeſty itſelf.

Theſe are the fond recollections of inſubſtantial honour, and he has now to ſeek more certain advantage, from this publication. In this view, he commits himſelf, and doubts not to receive pardon for the attempts of an humble

Muſe, under ſuch circumſtances, in an age, when learning and genius ſo ſplendidly diſplay themſelves, and reflect the moſt ſhining luſtre on the country from whence they ariſe.

PHILIP LEWIS.

To whom I am indebted for the following I know not; it appeared in the European Magazine for September, 1783, and is a juſt picture of my ſituation and ſufferings.

The MAN of the TOWN.

No. XIV.

OF all the calamities to which mankind are expoſed, perhaps that of outliving the friends of old age, is the ſevereſt. Though fortune ſhould retire with the aged to the vale of peace

and

and tranquillity, ſtill there is a void in the human breaſt, which neither books, domeſtics, nor the beauties of the livelieſt ſylvan ſcenes can fill up.

But this is ſurrounded with many comforts that the wretched, hopeleſs ſon of adverſity cannot taſte—the morning wakes him to taſte of the bitter draught of affliction through the day, and he retires to reſt with the reflection, that in all his weary walks, no proſpect of the moſt diſtant felicity opened to invite him to repoſe or happineſs.

Without reſpect, or love, or friends,
His ſolitary day deſcends.

I was led into this train of thought this morning, at breakfaſt, on being viſited by an old veteran of Covent-Garden Theatre, and no mean follower of the muſes. He prefaced his requeſt of my ſubſcribing to his Poems, by informing me he was totally neglected by his Nephew, and only ſurviving relation, and the only ſhift remaining, was that of ſoliciting ſubſcriptions to his literary labours from the tender and humane. "The friends of my youth are now no more," ſaid he, "and all I can hope for, is the ſlender

aſſiſtance

has

assistance my little productions may procure me, I have applied to my nephew repeatedly, who is deaf to all I can say, touching my deplorable situation. The gentlemen of the theatre to which I formerly belonged, with many others, have been very liberal to me, or my distresses would have drove me into madness 'ere this. I am in possession of many letters, that gave me the highest hopes of a provision in my old age; then it was not in the power of the writer to serve me, but now it is every way in his power,

"He bears his blushing honours thick upon him."

And now he leaves me a prey to the bitterest affliction: If I had any strength to support me, I need not court his bounty; an itinerant player has no permanent situation; he is continually shifting from town to town, which is attended with that fatigue youth only can support. Though sixty years have passed over my head, I was enabled to live in this manner till within these six months; a rheumatic disorder will scarce suffer me now to move a limb." "Well, said I, if you had no other recommendation to my bounty, than your being the companion of my favorite Cunningham, whose pastorals include

clude all the beauties of nature and genius, it would be sufficient."—I took a few copies of his work, and in a few minutes after was left to reflect on his hard fortune.

"Here is an old Man, said I, who, through age and infirmities, is sinking into the grave, without one creature existing to smooth the bed of death. He has a nephew unfeeling enough to see him in this situation, and will not lend a hand to comfort him. This nephew is a man of fortune, he has upwards of fifteen hundred pounds a year coming in, out of which he will not spare a trifle for the nearest of his blood, though bearing all the marks of indigence before his eyes every day; what can he say in excuse for such hard heartedness? Let me view his side of the picture.—The old man is reputed by *some*, malevolent, envious, and ungrateful*; it may be so, old men feel their injuries more poignantly than the young, they think they are entitled to a greater portion of benevolence than any other object, and when disappointed, something of these infirmities is often blended with their complaints. It is one of the weaknesses of human nature, and it may be forgiven in a seemingly despised old man.

Was

* A most illiberal, and unjust charge.

Was I this nephew, I ſhould think it a greater ſhame to ſee my Uncle ſoliciting the bounty of the very people I was obliged to aſſociate with every day, than to have him in a mean ſituation in the Theatre to which I belong. There is ſcarcely a doubt hangs upon it, but his neglect originates in want of feeling, in an ungenerous inſenſibility ill accordant with his ſituation. If this gentleman would ſave himſelf from farther reproach from the Man of the Town, and others equally hurt at ſuch unfeeling behaviour, he would inſtantly make ſome proviſion for his decayed uncle; it is by ſuch actions, and ſuch actions only, that he can claim the diſtinction of gentleman.

IT does not well become any man to be the herald of his own ability, yet it is hoped the printing of the following Verſes will not be deemed inadmiſſible, on the ground of vanity, or any other intereſted view. It is purely meant to ſhew the opinion in which the Author has been held by perſons of the moſt eſtimable character.

To Mr. PHILIP LEWIS.

OLD FRIEND,

WHEN I was young, and thou not old,
I've ſeen thee Shakeſpeare's wit uphold,
And crowds applaud thy ſkill,
Falſtaff, in thee, has ſhook the Pit,
The gall'ries caught the laughing fit,
Thou know'ſt 'tis true, dear Phil.

Thy

Thy head, ſince then, is crown'd with grey,
Yet ſtill, my very life, I'll lay,
That Time has left thee power,
To give *plump* JACK the juſtice due,
And carry him triumphant through,
The campaign of an hour.

Then try, old lad, to take the field,
Bruſh up thy baſket-hilt, and ſhield,
And follow HAL to battle;
Though guns and muſkets, be not there,
Yet loud applauſe ſhall rend the air;
And hands, and ſticks ſhall rattle.

Though modern Poets, aim to ſhine
In copper-lace; and mighty fine,
Serve up a kickſhaw treat:
Give me a cup of racy ſack,
From Shakeſpeare's flaggon, Honeſt JACK,
The Devil take their meat.

Why then, in little paltry ſcenes,
Where poſts may ſerve for Kings and Queens,
Art thou at hide, and ſeek?
Come on, Friend Philip, claim thy right,
And give us laughter, in *one* night,
Enough to ſerve a week.

A Briton *thou!* O! fye, for shame!
Unworthy of that sacred name,
If thou canst Britons slight;
By keeping back great Shakespeare's wit,
Ev'n *I*, with Gallery and Pit,
Would damn thee every night.

J. HANKES.

Brecknock. Feb. 28, 1784.

To Mr. PHILIP LEWIS.

LEWIS, with various comic powers endu'd,
Produc'd by Nature, in her merriest mood;
Stranger to that low paltry bait, grimace,
His very soul seen clearly in his face;
Comes, tho' scarce known, with Humour by his side,
To Laughter link'd, his pleasing, wanton bride.
In Bridget—gods!—the house was in a roar,
Whoever felt such sterling strokes before?
That mirth which he, and *he alone* can raise,
At once proclaim his merits, and his praise.

COURTNEY MELMOTH.

THE POETICAL WORKS OF PHILIP LEWIS.

To Miſs MACKWORTH.

MAY ev'ry bleſſing crown thy youth,
Thy beauty, innocence, and truth;
May ev'ry latent virtue ſhoot,
'Tis by the flower we know the fruit;
'Tis in thy blooming years, we trace
The honours of a virtuous race:
A faultleſs form, a noble mind,
By elegance and taſte refin'd;

The

The Graces, lovely! Sifters three!
Unite their varied charms, in thee!
Yet gen'rous maid, you muſt not ceaſe
To praiſe that Pow'r beſtowing theſe,
But grateful and ſubmiſſive own,
They're Nature's gifts, and not thy own,
Giv'n to her fav'rite's alone.
And when Youth's bleſſings paſs away,
Still let a clear unclouded ray
Brighten thy full meridian day;
Then when the noon of life is paſt,
Let happier evenings ſoothe the laſt,
And when you quit this frail abode,
Reſt in the boſom of thy GOD.

SO BE IT.

The BULFINCH *and* ROBIN.

A FABLE.

FAR from the ſchools of claſſic light;
Far from the awful Sage's ſight;
Far from fair Wiſdom's poliſh'd code;
Far from the barren book-worm's road;

O far

O far from learning's lucid ring,
The ſons of nature ſit and ſing.
From pleaſant grove and tranquil brook,
The ruſtic ſtudent takes his book:
From every ſource of rural rhyme,
He bids the dancing meaſure chime.
Now finds with joy, that pine-topt hill
Will ſweetly ſuit with babbling rill;
That ſhepherd, cot, and flowery-plain,
Will meet in verſe—with ſimple ſwain;
That fairy elves in magic play,
Muſt make the ſtanza trip away;
That willow walks, and ſombrous yews,
Will charm the melancholy muſe:
Fair Fancy prompts the line along,
And Nature will approve the ſong.
Yes, happy man; his genuine reed
Can teach perſuaſion how to plead;
In native numbers ſoft and free,
Awake to mirth and melody.
Yes, happy man! he loves the ſeat,
For muſing meditation meet:
Where no diſcordant world controuls
The ſmile of peace, that ſong of ſouls.
When firſt the morning's meekeſt beam,
Shall ſilver o'er the ſedgy ſtream,

Reflecting

Reflecting every grace of day,
His pipe and pulse shall sing and play:
The midnight moon, whose placid power
Illustrates the nocturnal hour,
Thro' the pale poplar trees shall trace
His studious step and pensive pace,
There wild imagination tells
Of sea-beat cliffs and coral shells;
Of lightning's flash, and Ætna's fire,
And rocks and precipices dire;
The shipwreck'd bark, and thund'ring wave,
And dark unfathomable cave;
Vast seas of blood, and orgies foul;
The Norway's wolf's incessant howl.
The lion's glare, and dragon's den,
And shrieking shades, and dying men.
Now Fancy fords the rapid Rhine;
Now climbs the Alps and Appenine;
Now, weeping, wades through burning lands,
And pants, and pants, in parched lands.
Now, now, she flies on eagle's wings,
She mounts aloft, she soars, she sings!
Again her spicy pinions sails
On balmy aromatic gales,
To hail the fair Circassian maids,
To breathe soft airs in citron shades,

To

To sleep on beds of blushing flowers.
To win the Muse in myrtle bowers,
Sweet Fancy, all proceeds from thee,
And soul-inspiring Poesy,
Come then, my Fair, O deign to bless,
And be my sparkling patroness;
Unlock thy bright eternal spring,
And let a Child of Nature sing.

A Bullfinch, that from earliest age
Had dwelt a captive in a cage,
Was taught within his wired school,
To sing by fits, and sing by rule.
Each day he charm'd the listning fair,
With tender tune and plaintive air:
He sung the swain of ARNO's hill;
He sung the lass of PATIE's mill;
And learn'd, as other students do,
But all his notes were perfect too:
For Art, mechanic Art, prevail'd,
And Nature slept, and Fancy fail'd.

It chanc'd, where once his cage was hung,
A solitary Robin sung
The note of Nature wild and free,
Without a compass or a key.

Soft dancing on a tender ſpray,
He trill'd the liquid note away.

The jealous Bulfinch, with diſdain,
Attended to his neighbour's ſtrain;
And thus, with ſelf-important ſneer,
Addreſs'd the ſylvan ſonnetteer:

" Ceaſe thy vile prate, vain fool, and fly,
" Nor dare to ſing while I am nigh.
" Did ever judge of muſic hear
" Such meaſures vibrate on his ear?
" Did ever Son of Wiſdom ſee
" A thing ſo uninform'd as thee?
" Say, in what gloomy, Gothic ſcene,
" Has all thy converſation been?
" In what unſocial deſart, ſay,
" Where Science never ſhed a ray?
" Who firſt thy young ideas form'd,
" Enlarg'd thy ſenſe, thy boſom warm'd?
" What maſter train'd thy infant-powers?
" What themes engag'd thy riper hours?
" Who firſt thy priſon'd fancy freed?
" Diſcordant ſongſter, who, indeed!
" Hence, quit my ſight, and hide your ſhame,
" In thoſe rude woods from whence you came;

" There the proud path of knowledge ſhun,
" And ſeal your ſight againſt the ſun."

The patient Robin ceas'd his ſong,
And meekly ſaid, " He thought it wrong
" To ſpeak with ſuch ſupreme diſdain,
" For wherefore ſhould the wiſe be vain;
" Conceiv'd 'twas Wiſdom's better part
" To curb the paſſions of the heart;
" Each poor illiberal thought controul,
" And give the generous turn of ſoul."
Proceeding thus: " My mind, at moſt,
" Can little cultivation boaſt;
" My walk in life I hold obſcure,
" But patience will befriend the poor.
" In that rude neſt where firſt I lay,
" Unconſcious of the blaze of day,
" E'er time had ſtretch'd my callow wing,
" Or taught my little throat to ſing,
" I learn'd my parents plaintive airs,
" As warbling forth their matin pray'rs;
" To Nature ev'ry hymn was paid,"
A miſtreſs ſure to be obey'd.
" To her kind care alone I owe
" Spontaneous numbers as they flow:

" She, nurs'd my wild poetic flame,
" At distance from the fields of fame.
" Her gracious presence can inspire
" With music's change, and fancy's fire.
" With her, content, I sing unknown,
" Content I live *to her* alone.
" Important bird, enjoy your chains,
" And leave to me my *woods* and *plains*;
" Inform'd by *Art*, sublimely soar,
" 'Till *Science* can instruct no more."

To Learning *be all homage paid,*
But Genius *needs no foreign aid.*

On TEMPERANCE.

WHEN the rational mind
To mirth is inclin'd,
Let Temperance guide the repast;
Then reason and sense
Their blessings dispense,
And those temperate blessings may last.

When

When Gluttony feeds,
Repentance ſucceeds,
Attended by ſorrow and fear;
Whilſt Temperance bland
Leads health by the hand,
And chearfulneſs ſmiles in the rear.

Our ſorrows to drown,
And the evening to crown,
We madly repair to the bowl;
Then think we're divine,
Whilſt we're guzzling like ſwine,
Enervating body and ſoul.

Our ſorrows to cure,
With patience endure,
Nor vainly repine at our fate:
By endurance; we gain
Some receſs from our pain,
And *ſubmiſſion* may ſhorten the date.

A REFLECTION.

WHAT to the Living we deny,
We give profuſely when men die,
When we're inſenſible of praiſe,
We're crown'd with myrtles, laurels, bays!
Whilſt living, envy, ſlanders, ſcorns,
Still crown us—*with a crown of thorns.*

To Dr. BROWNE, *of* MANCHESTER.

SIR,

TO your humanity I owe
Returning Health's enlivening glow.
I feel her warm prolific ray,
Mild as the bluſh of opening day!
The wounded mind more anguiſh knows,
Than all the agonizing throes
That our corporeal ſubſtance feels
From burning racks, and tort'ring wheels.

Bleſt

Bleſt be that hand, whoſe healing art
Can lend new vigour to the heart;
Can raiſe and animate the whole,
And beam bright ſunſhine on the ſoul!

By Wiſdom's aid, ſuperior ills we brave,
And next to giving life, is how to ſave.

INVOCATION TO HEALTH.

INSCRIBED TO

JOSEPH CRADDOCK, Eſq.

Of Gumley, Leiceſterſhire.

SAY, tranquil goddeſs, where's thy home,
Ah! where thy bleſt retreat?
Within thy precincts let me roam,
To find thy halcyon ſeat.

I've

I've ſought thee in the buſy throng,
In calm reluſive ſhades,
Where the ſtill ſtreamlet ſteals along,
Amidſt the opening glades.

In the receſſes of the bower,
When *fervid* Summer glows;
And where the Sun reſigns his power
To cold December ſnows.

In palaces of coſtly ſtate,
Where power and ſplendour reign;
Or where the morning breezes wait,
To cheer the early ſwain;

I've wander'd up the hether'd hill,
And o'er the daiſied lawn;
Stood liſtening to the murmuring rill,
And watch'd the peep of dawn.

I've long purſu'd, and often thought
I had thee in my view;
Hope, ſtill deceiv'd me;—vagrant nought!
The Viſion was not you.

Then

Then let me taſte thy roſy breath,
With eager ardour, ſip
The balm (an enemy to death)
From thy nectarious lip.

Or near thy dwelling let me tread;
Perhaps ſome genial ray,
Fraught with thy bleſſings, may impede
The current of decay.

At noon, at midnight, op'ning morn,
Or in the cloſing eve;
In whatſoever 'ſemblance borne,
Thy viſits I'd receive.

O, ſtand not then on time, or place;
Lay compliment aſide.
Let me behold thy ruddy face!
I'd claſp thee as a bride!

The feeble glow-worm's beamy ray
Contains no heat; her light,
Like vagrant vapours, lead aſtray
The traveller i'th' night.

So oft thy flattering *ſemblance* wears
An outward florid bloom,
And, in a moment after, ſhares
The ſilence of the tomb.

But let me taſte that temper'd bliſs,
That ſprings from thee alone;
For every bleſſing worth a wiſh
Is circled in thy zone.

Impell'd by hope to perſevere,
Try'd Eſculapian aid,
And led by Brown's* directive care,
I caught the flying maid.

" Now, you have found her, cry'd the ſage,
" To *fix* the uncertain fair,
" Her beſt auxiliaries engage
" Bland temperance and air.

" And to *ſecure* her ſmiles for aye,
" And keep the lady quiet,
Be very heedful every day,
" In *exerciſe* and *diet*."

'Tis

* Dr. Brown.

'Tis chiefly youth enjoys thy ſmile,
Which every bliſs endears;
What comforts wait (ah! woe the while)
To cheriſh drooping years?

The thorny paths, the rugged way,
Through life's uncertain road,
The more we wander, longer ſtray
The *heavier* is the load.

In the *meridian* of their day,
In their full ſtrength and power,
How many *thouſands* paſs away,
The victims of an hour.

Much happier, then, are blameleſs youth,
Who periſh in their prime;
They never feel the canker'd tooth
Of *care-engendering* time.

Their date is ſhort, their cares are few,
On youthful pinions gay
They quit the ſcene, and only view
The *ſunſhine of their day.*

Thrice happy lot, by fate decreed
To leave their ſtations ſoon;
They run the race of life with ſpeed,
And reach their goal by noon.

Along the line of *lengthen'd* life
What ſorrows we engage!
While we protect the ling'ring ſtrife,
'Twixt *death* and doating age.

Let dark oblivion ſpread her wing;
Bid all their ſorrows ceaſe;
From diſſolution only ſpring
Their everlaſting peace.

AN

AN EPISTLE TO
Mr. BROWNSMITH, COMEDIAN.

DIDST thou not promiſe, wicked varlet,
Without adviſing *rogue*, or *harlot*,
That thou would'ſt write to me, and frequent?
Thou'ſt broke thy promiſe, faithleſs recreant.

But let me firſt, 'ere I proceed,
Declare, upon my word and deed,
Thoſe terms are meant for *two* alone,
The reſt may wear DIANA's zone;
Be chaſte as JOSEPH when he fled
Dame POTIPHAR's rejected bed;
To love and riſing greatneſs blind,
He left his raviſhed robe behind:
The modeſt youth thought there was harm in't,
And rather choſe to loſe his garment.

So

So to the reſt of your diviſion,
I wiſh ſucceſs and fair proviſion.—
Now, I ſuppoſe, thoſe Dons imperious,
Have changed thy comic into ſerious;
And now, inſtead of idle drinking,
Thou'rt turn'd to ſtudy and to thinking;
Uſing no more the jeer ironic,
The quibble, pun, and wit laconic,
But ſquare thy life by rules Platonic,
And t' the amaze of all beholders,
Bear all *my* burthens on *your* ſhoulders.

Mark but the ſequel of this letter,
You'll find I'm altered for the better.
The evil that our foes intend us
Proves very oft the means to mend us.
With fifteen ſhillings fair per week,
I keep a dry and cheerful cheek;
Grumble no more at ſcanty ſharing,
And impoſitions groſs and glaring.
Inſtead of wielding ſword and truncheon,
I wield a good ſubſtantial luncheon.
No more I rack my brain with ſtudy,
But riſing with the morning ruddy,
With ſpirits light, conceptions clear,
I'm worth five hundred pounds per year.

From

From moderate labour I inherit
Health and tranquility of ſpirit,
Keen appetite and good digeſtion;
Theſe are prime bleſſings, out of queſtion:
Of theſe poſſeſt, my title's clear
To full five hundred pounds per year.
But let me leave this point at once,
And ſteer directly to the nonce.—
I'll ſoon aſtoniſh half the nation
With a ſtupendous publication,
Price half-a-crown;—the work is cheap,
The matter very dark and deep;
So very dark and deep, I doubt
My readers ne'er will find it out:
And then to make the matter better;
'Tis CASLON's new-caſt Engliſh letter,
Octavo ſize, a ſpacious margin;
I never ſold a better bargain.

Write you a plain proſaic letter,
That I may know your meaning better,
And with more ſpeed; the brain prolific;
For dull neglect has no ſpecific.
The preſent buſineſs urges haſte;
We've neither time nor words to waſte:
You muſt proceed, *ſans interdiction*,
To ſwell the liſt of my ſubſcription.

Now

Now mark the change of our conditions,
'Tis hard for *kings* to write petitions!
All human grandeur is precarious;
Think on the fate of BELISARIUS,
The mighty general to JUSTINIAN,
Reduc'd to mouldy bread and onion;
Compell'd to ſtretch his reverend palms
On the road ſide for wretched alms.
Then why ſhould I complain and grumble;
My fate was ne'er ſo high, ſo humble:
Though in ideal greatneſs I am
Equal to HECTOR's father, PRIAM;
Like him too, I've had fifty ſons,
(At different times, tho' not at once)
With fifty daughters fair, to match 'em,
Still one by one, as I could catch 'em.
But let me quit this rhyming ramble,
And fall into a gentle amble;
Tho' were my Pegaſus as thine is,
I'd gallop proudly to my *finis*.

To my requeſt be you obſervant,
And ſerve your friend and humble ſervant.

P. L.

AN

AN EPISTLE TO

Mr. DAVID BAKER, Son of the celebrated Mr. HENRY BAKER, F. R. S. Author of *The Microſcope made Eaſy*, &c.

FRIEND David Lionel Erſkine Baker;
Jew, Chriſtian, Muſſelman, or Quaker;
You that by turns converſe with all,
Both the great, vulgar, and the ſmall,
And by a kind of tranſmigration,
Faſhion yourſelf to every ſtation;—
Now boozing with companions ſcurvy,
Now revelling with my Lord at Turvey*,
Where, by the force of learning deep,
You talk his Lordſhip—faſt aſleep.
But as I don't intend to gall you,
I'll neither wit nor wittol call you.

F But

* Lord KINGSLAND's ſeat, nine miles north of Dublin.

But I have thought you, by my conſcience,
A very madman, long and long ſince.
Strange! that a man of parts and genius
Should guilty be of things ſo heinous;
That an adept in all the arts
Should proſtitute his pen and parts
In ſong, ode, prologue, farce to write,
Which only ſerve our pipes to light.
All your reward for loſs of time
Is poverty, that curſe of rhyme;
Yet think yourſelf as rich as CRESUS,
While brouzing on the hill Parnaſſus;
There, like APOLLO's favourite ſon,
Quaffing rich draughts of Helicon,
You in the fields of fancy ſtray
So far, you oft'times loſe your way.
Uſeleſs to you are parts and learning,
A judgement ſound, a deep diſcerning;
A knowledge great in the *Belles Lettres*,
To pleaſe, or to inſtruct your betters,
While loſt in giddy, vain purſuits,
You of theſe talents loſe the fruits.
'Tis no excuſe for all your mad tricks
That you are vers'd i'th' mathematics;
Nor ſkill in judicial Aſtrology
For your imprudence an apology.

To satisfy your friend, proceed
To let me know what books you read;
How you employ the passing day,
And *while* the tedious hour away;
How many plans you have projected,
How many fleas you have dissected,
And how his Lordship's health's affected;
How many capons have been roasted,
How many loyal health's been toasted;
How many—O this rhyme comes pat in—
How many sentences of Latin,
What quantities of French you've quoted;
How many speeches you have spouted:
In short, you must concisely run
O'er every thing you've said or done,
From the rising to the setting sun.

Now pray present, in words most cogent,
My best respects to Captain NUGENT;
And ah! that I, as heretofore,
Could add—to NUGENT of Dunore.
Now what avails the sigh sincere,
The heartfelt throb, the gushing tear!
Our common patron I deplore:
NUGENT, alas! is now no more.

But hush, my Muſe, nor raſhly try
The ſadly pleaſing path of elegy.
Not you, my friend, if right I deem,
Could write an elegy on *him*.

The jade has ta'en me at my word,
And left me of my own accord;
So, 'till I hear from you again,
Your friend and ſervant I remain.

P. L.

DUBLIN, Dec. 8, 1758.

AN
OCCASIONAL PROLOGUE,

Spoken at the opening of the Theatre at Brighthelmstone, in the Year 1775.

To ſave our ſhatter'd veſſel from deſtruction,
We have rebuilt her on a new conſtruction;
And now we venture boldly on the main,
With gentle breezes under Admiral Payne.
With ſtreamers flying, flowing ſails unfurl'd,
We come in ſearch of a Peruvian world.
Be you our pilots, ſtraight propitious gales
Shall waft us into port with ſwelling ſails.
If our endeavours can ſecure your ſmiles,
This little ſpot, like fair Bermuda's iſles,
Shall like a new-found paradiſe appear,
Where an eternal verdure crowns the year;
Where all that's fabled, realiz'd we ſee,
Perpetual blooms! the ever-bloſſom'd tree,
With the rich fruits of favour'd Italy.

Now

Now let's ſurvey th' enchanting proſpect round:
Methinks I tread upon Arcadian ground!
Exhilirating breezes cheer the brain,
And health comes bluſhing from the ſouthern main!
Light o'er the downs the tepid airs advance,
On gentle currents from the ſhores of France;
Health, like the morn, with placid aſpect meek,
Reſtores the crimſon to the pallid cheek.
She, gentle goddeſs, ready to forgive,
She only bids us to refrain, and live.
Her proffer'd boon, if erring man denies,
Then, with averted face the goddeſs flies.
And here you ruſh, with eager haſte to find
The lilies and the roſes left behind:
And may you find them here!—may the gay ſcene
Cure you, at leaſt, of vapours and the ſpleen.
After the pleaſures of the paſſing day,
Come here, and ſmile a tranquil hour away.—
We're taught of old, the pious and the ſage,
With veneration patroniz'd the ſtage;
Where pleaſure and inſtruction ſtill unite,
And give at leaſt, a rational delight:
Kindly forgive us for our want of ſkill,
Excuſe the deed, and ſanctify the will.

A PROLOGUE

A

PROLOGUE to the Tragedy of DOUGLAS.

Spoken at the opening of the SOUTHAMPTON Theatre, in the year 1773.

INSPIR'D with pleaſing hope to entertain,
To-night we offer HOME's delightful ſtrain,
Whoſe pleaſing numbers muſically flow,
And open all the avenues of woe.
MATILDA's ſorrows cloud the brighteſt eyes;
When her long-loſt and new-found DOUGLAS dies,
The melting ſcene excites the pitying tear;
Your tender boſoms can't deny it here,
If we have power to paint the paſſions true:
Applauſe and pity ſtill belong to you.

To this bright ſpot the gay and grave retire,
And youth enjoys what invalids deſire:
Yet ſuch the varied beauties of the ſcene,
Youth is elated, and old age ſerene.

If

If we can ſmooth the wrinkled brow of care,
Convey inſtruction to the young and fair,
Expoſe the knave, and ridicule the fool,
And make our theatre a moral ſchool;
Give ſentiment and virtue all their due,
And hold up folly to the public view,
Our ends are anſwer'd—joind to your applauſe,
Our only charter of theatric laws.

The ORIGIN *of the* STAGE.

A FRAGMENT.

MINUTE were the original of things:
From a ſmall ſtem the ſtately cedar ſprings.
To ancient THESPIS, the Athenian ſage,
We owe the firſt foundation of the Stage.
Tho' rudely planted, ſoon the laurell'd tree
Spread its bright leaves o'er Greece and Italy,
And nurtur'd there by Learning's genial ray,
Gave to the Drama a perpetual day.—
In Greece ſhe flouriſh'd long, fair Science ſpread
A brighter radiance round her beamy head:
Rome conquer'd Greece—the Arts, a ſocial band,
Fled from the confines of a conquer'd land;
Free in themſelves, they left the guilty ſhades
Where power obtrudes, and tyranny pervades.

At length the Vandals over-ran the age,
Slew all the Arts, and with them fell the Stage.
A long dark lapſe of ignorance ſucceeds,
The altar flames not, nor a victim bleeds;
Religion baniſh'd, with her angel train,
And the Egyptian learning render'd vain:
Then dullneſs reign'd ſupreme; her ebon throne,
With power magnetic, govern'd every zone;
Not one dim ray of Science beam'd between,
But the wide earth one deſolated ſcene.

AN EPITAPH,

Deſigned for the late celebrated Comedian,
Mr. EDWARD SHUTER.

THE touchſtone of true mirth lies here!
THALIA, hovering o'er his bier,
Drops through her clouded ſmiles a tear.
She muſt her favourite ſon bemoan;
But NATURE cries, " He's all my own;
" 'Twas by my laws he form'd his plan;
" I rear'd the actor, rais'd the man.
" Unletter'd, yet his ample mind,
" Like time and ſpace, was unconfin'd,
" And gave *diſtinctions* to the wind.
" Think not to rob me then of him,
" My favourite child of fun and whim!
" When mortals gladden'd at his joke,
" It was not he, 'twas I that ſpoke:
" When the wide theatre was ſhook
" With peals of laughter at his look,

" They thought 'twas SHUTER—never knew
" That I thoſe peals of laughter drew.
" All claims but mine muſt be withdrawn,
" I clos'd his life, and nurs'd his dawn;
" Therefore to me, alone he owes
"" The opening of his life and cloſe.
" The pedant teachers of the ſchools,
" Who fetter genius by their rules,
" Can boaſt no merit from my ſon;
" For he was mine, and mine alone."

On Mr. POWELL.

POWELL, of different requiſites poſſeſs'd,
Fine native feelings, in a gentle breaſt;
In large profuſion to his heart was giv'n
Pity, the mildeſt paſſion lent by heaven;
With ſoft perſuaſive accents, to aſſwage
Love's jealous pangs, or paint the grief of age.
In blooming youth, how ſtrong in him appears
The rage of Majeſty; the grief of years,
In nature's guiſe, with eaſe he could controul.
The tender paſſions, center'd in his ſoul,
All lackey'd in his train, couchant appear,
His ready miniſters: the willing tear,
Soft guſhing, ſpreads a ſympathetic woe;
We weep, and wonder whence our ſorrows flow.
But when OTHELLO's wrong poſſeſs his mind,
He riſes equal to the taſk aſſign'd:

Fierce

Fierce terror ſhakes his frame, the livid fire
Flaſh from his eyes, and dreadful is his ire;
His conſcious honour injur'd—and his fame—
Convulſive Ætna breathes a milder flame.

His blaze of glory, his bright morning ſun,*
Went down ere noon, ere half its courſe was run.
Peace to his gentle ſhade—envy be dumb,
Let the green laurel flouriſh round his tomb.

* Theſe lines in Italic were written after his death.

On Mr. HOLLAND.

HOLLAND, by ſtudy and aſſiduous art,
Oft charm'd the judgement, ſometimes reach'd the heart:
Where the ſtrain'd emphaſis directs the ſenſe,
We find ſtrong tints of labour'd excellence:
Like a mechanic painter giving grace,
By art's nice rules, to ſome angelic face,
And wants but the Promethean touch to give
Warmth to the piece, and bid the picture live.

In

In parts where paſſions fierce on paſſions wait,
Indignant anger, or obdurate hate;
'Th' impetuous HOTSPUR, or the gallant PIERRE,
Or where the villain checks the half-ſhed tear,
HOLLAND unrivall'd ſtands——
In generous OSMAN! noble, honeſt, brave,
Free from mean paſſions, but to love a ſlave;
In the laſt act, what dreadful anguiſh tear
His noble heart—rage, fury, love, deſpair.
From ZARA dead, the lover could not part,
Remorſe and pity break his mighty heart.—
Here let me ſtop, leſt my unequal praiſe
Should ſink the character it means to raiſe.

On

On Mr. WESTON.

THE natural actor of his part,
Whom Nature made a jeſt on,
Where Genius borrows not from Art,
Is little THOMAS WESTON.

The trade of acting to explore
Is quite an eaſy taſk;
Let Tragedy ſet up a roar,
And Humour wear a maſk.

The Ape of Nature ſtill unfolds
Some ſtrange eccentric creature,
But ſterling merit ever holds
The mirror up to Nature.

On Mr. GARRICK's *quitting the Stage.*

I SAW him rising in the East*,
In all his energetic glow!
Now see him setting in the West ‡,
In greater ſplendour than he roſe!

* Goodman's Fields. ‡ Drury Lane.

On Mr. GARRICK's *Death.*

BUT now this Sun, has ſet indeed,
Adieu to the neglected Stage!
When ſhall another Sun ſucceed,
To warm, and witch a future age?
NEVER.

On Mr. FOOTE.

THAT Wit and Humour ſhould agree
To blend their various powers in thee;
That Genius ſhould with Judgement join,
And ſay to FOOTE, "Our gifts are thine!"
Nature profuſely gave all theſe
To favour'd ARISTOPHANES.

An Extempore *to Mrs.* GREVILLE, *a celebrated Actreſs.*

THO' much provok'd, unbend that brow,
And bid reſentment die;
The Graces mildly teach you how,
And Reaſon tells you *why**.

* The perſon offending was much in liquor.

On Mr. DUNSTALL.

SHAKESPEARE himſelf admoniſhes the clown,
To utter nothing more than what's ſet down:
DUNSTALL, obſervant of that claſſic rule,
Sticks to the laws of the dramatic ſchool;
And in the honeſt veteran appears
The conſtant ſervice of his younger years.

An EPITAPH.

BENEATH this ſtone lies *Quick*, and *dead*,
Safe flow'd within his earthly ſhed.
Had not grim death play'd him this trick
He had not yet been *dead*—but *Quick*.

To FRANCIS RANDELL, *Eſq.*

AS my frail life may end before
You pay the debt to nature due,
The only tribute I implore,
Is juſt a paſſing ſigh from you.

And

And own my fate has been ſevere,
Ruin'd by Slander's venom'd tongue:
I never thought the earwig near,
Nor ſaw the ſerpent till he ſtung.

The evils of my chequer'd day,
My erring follies (not a few)
Forgot beneath ſome ſod of clay;
My little merits live with you.

But if my wife—ah! bondage dear!
The bitterneſs of want ſhould prove,
Then drop a ſympathizing tear,
Let friendſhip take the place of love.

In early life the paſſion came;
Nouriſh'd by time, the paſſion grew;
Age cannot yet repreſs the flame,
It burns as brightly and as new.

Fancy

Fancy ſtill brings her to my ſight,
Blooming in all her youthful charms,
And memory recalls the night
When firſt ſhe bleſs'd me in her arms.

Her beaming eyes of lucid blue,
The dimples in her cheeks ſo rare;
Her vermill'd lip—the nutbrown hue,
And flowing ringlets of her hair.

'Tis not in fancy to conceive,
Much leſs in language to expreſs:
Her eyes might brighten ſetting eve,
And make the morning's glory leſs.

Now mark the ſad reverſe, and ſee
Her pallid cheeks, her health decay'd;
Chill'd in the cells of penury,
Where all her bluſhing beauties fade.

Time has devour'd each *youthful* grace
That Nature's partial pencil drew;
Nor left a lily in the place
Where once her tranſient roſes blew.

Dim ſorrow cloud thoſe eyes ſo bright,
That erſt were wont to ſhine on me;—
Dull abſence brings a double night,
Then double muſt her ſorrows be.

Let proſp'rous *William*, keep his ſtate,
Make harder yet, a heart of ſteel;
Rather forego, a cauſeleſs hate,
And learn from RANDELL, how to feel.

EPITAPH

An EPITAPH,

Written in EDINBURGH, in the Year 1769.

UNDER this ſtane, ſome feet beneath,
Lies ane that nathing did bequeath.
That's unco ſtrange! had he nae friend
To enjoy the geer he left behind?
Had he nae wife to leave until her
His cot, his kye, and bags of ſiller?
Na friend of aw!—the truth lies here,
He was nae faſh'd wi' wardly geer.
He had a wife, gin he had ſiller,
Or cot, or kye to leave until her.
But hoot awa! ha ye e'er kenn'd
A puer mon yet, that had a friend?
Yet he left aw he had to leave:
Who nathing have, can nathing give.
His mortal part to earth he gave,
Aye doom'd the tenant of a grave:
His ſoul until his hands that gave it,
In mercy, then, gued God, receive it.

EPITAPH

On Mrs. MURRAY, who died at NORWICH, in the 20th Year of her Age.

Written at the Request of her HUSBAND.

HERE rest, dear Saint, eternal Bliss be thine!
Wait till thy kindred Spirit blends with mine.
Then we'll together, wing our trackless way,
To the bright realms of everlasting day.
When thy pure Spirit, breathes ethereal Air,
Rejoicing Angels, shall attend thee, there;
And lead thee (suppliant) to th' eternal throne,
There plead *my* cause.—Ah! make that cause thy own!
Never to part again, no more to die,
But live in bliss through all Eternity.

EPITAPH,

On the late Mrs. ARNE.

POOR, pretty Bird, thou'ſt ſung thyſelf to reſt,
Too early ſoaring, from thy native neſt.
She left this earth to breathe a purer air,
Join'd the Angelic choir, and fix'd her ſtation there.

AN EPIGRAM.

BY many people it is ſaid,
Nine Taylors make a man,
But can *nine* W—l—n's make one *Ned!**
No, hang me, if they can.—

* NED SHUTER.

The

The PLAYER's LENTEN INVITATION.

Written at GLOUCESTER, 1788.

'TWAS on the eve of Paſſion Week,
When we've our provender to ſeek,
A friend invited me to dine,
Not on roaſt turkey, ham and chine;
But on good plain ſubſtantial food,
To nouriſh me and do me good.
Next morn a civil meſſage came,
To excuſe himſelf, and eke his dame:
But if I'd wait on him to-morrow,
He would medicine my ſorrow;
Accordingly I call'd on Monday,
And every day 'twixt that and Sunday.
Tueſday, Wedneſday, Thurſday, Friday,
Not one of all theſe days were my day,
And on Saturday I called again,
And I was diſappointed then.

My friend ſtill abſent from his dome,
And I with heavy heart went home,
Thus mortified, I finiſh'd Lent in
Faſting, praying, and repenting.

EPIGRAM.

WHO was the cauſe of Adams fall,
And doom'd to Death the Sons of Earth?
The Serpent firſt did Eve enthrall,
And gave to Sin and Sorrow birth.

The woman did the man deceive,
And to his ruin Adam drew.
Adam was tempted by one Eve,
And Ev--r--d undone by two.

The

The EXCURSION.

WHEN THESPIS led his troop to Stow,
Their entertainment prov'd, ſo, ſo,
Better than ſome deſerv'd I trow.
The leader of this forlorn hope,
Followed the ſteps of Gen'ral Cope;
Scar'd with the dangers of the day,
Was the firſt man that ran away.
Abandon'd in this woeful plight,
The heroes ſculk'd away by night:
The braveſt troops have oft' times fled
Without a leader at their head;
Farewell ye tinſel Kings and Queens,
And all the pride of paper ſcenes;
Farewell!—poor Cooke is quite undone,
"Othello's occupation's gone!"
Still doom'd to wander o'er the globe,
With as much patience as poor JOB;

In ſearch of a precarious living,
Many denying, others giving:
But to humanity's diſgrace,
Moſt give with a denying face;
Never conſidering that a mind,
By nature, or by art refin'd,
Finds more relief for all its ſorrows,
From cordial looks, and kind good morrows,
Than from a princely preſent ſent,
As a rebuke and puniſhment.
The value of the gift beſtow'd,
Conſiſts entirely in the mode;
A friend may ſend his friend a hare,
And friendſhip be cemented there.
Another lend a thouſand pound,
And in the mode, the boſom wound.
The poor dependant ſpirit freed,
Looks to the motive of the deed;
Conſiders whether pride or power
Made him the *object* of the hour;
Or if from friendſhip's ſacred flame,
The unaſk'd ſilent bounty came.
Adverſity, relentleſs power,
Still governs my unvaried hour;
Her gorgon viſage, dread and drear,
Is ever in my front or rear;

Oft

Oft to elude her I have tried,
I've chang'd my place—ſhe's at my ſide.
Whether I travel Eaſt or Weſt,
The Man of ſorrow ſtill confeſs'd,
Misfortune will not let me reſt.
Or Eaſt, or Weſt, or North, or South,
The fury ſlaps me in the mouth;
At length in ſearch of food and freedom,
I bend my weary ſteps toward Needham.
To Nailor's hoſpitable ſeat,
The wand'ring pilgrim's ſure retreat.
The doors on pliant hinges reſting,
Moſt readily admit the gueſt in;
Whilſt the mild maſter of the dome,
Invites the wand'rer to his home;
With look benign and cheering grace,
Drys the ſad tear on ſorrow's face.

Round mitred heads, thro' ſleeves of lawn,
Does heaven deſcended pity dawn?
Not ſo—be this advice purſued,
In humbler ſtations *ſeek the good.*

Needham Market.

FINIS.